Jordan Brady Loewen-Colón (00:00:07):

Hello, and welcome to the Mapping the Doctrine of Discovery podcast. The producers of this podcast would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands that the Syracuse University now stands.

Jake Edwards (00:00:30):

Anytime we gather, we put our minds together kindly and respectfully as one and give a great gratitude to all the people who are able to be here. And so, we let it be that way in our minds. And then we direct our thoughts as one again to our mother, the earth, who's carrying on her responsibilities, the great responsibilities to provide for us as we walk about in peace and contentment. And so, we kindly and respectfully put our minds together as one and give a great gratitude to our mother, the earth, for still carrying on her original instructions to provide for us. And so, we let it be that way and our minds.

(00:01:14):

And we direct our thoughts to the plant life, the medicines that were put here. And we encourage everybody's mind to be as one with gratitude that the medicines in the plants and the berries. And when I say I cut it short, some speakers can do the Ganoñhéñ•nyoñ, the Thanksgiving address for 45 minutes to an hour, sometimes longer without translation.

(00:01:43):

And so, what they'll incorporate is the small details of the responsibilities each that is spoken of has that was given in their original instructions, and the birds, the seeds, the plant life, the roots and their connection to the earth, to our Mother Earth, as we have that same connection and the waters that's needed.

(00:02:06):

And sometimes, the speakers will go on to, that's songs that the birds sing and the words that they speak that bring peace to us when we listen to them. And when we listen to them, it's not just, yeah, I heard the birds this morning, I listened to them this morning to what they have to say for this day. They know already. They're up early and they know already. And so, they also have the responsibility of moving seeds around from different berry bushes. You've got blackberry bushes so that we can all enjoy it. And their songs and their words and their stories that they have and their journeys, they can see like the eagle sees.

(00:02:49):

And we get into that about the leaders of all the animals, the leaders of the fruits and the berries, strawberry is the leader of them. And the leaders of the food sources is the three sisters. The corns, the beans and the squash are the leaders of the food sustenances. The animals, the four-legged is the deer. And they get into the Thanksgiving of all their responsibilities that we know that are still carrying on is in fine detail.

(00:03:25):

And so, when we cut cross-lives, we just mentioned the deer as the leader or the strawberry as the leader. And we don't get into the ceremonial aspects of it at some speakers will at certain times. And the leader of the winged animals is the eagle. And you get into the description of what the eagle's vision is and how it was placed on top of the great tree of peace and how the great tree of peace is.

(00:03:53):

And the winds that come, the winds that are circulating throughout that give us breath, fresh, pure air to breathe also strengthens the roots of the forest, which strengthens our bond with the forest to our mother of the earth. And so, cutting it short, you lose a lot, you miss out on a lot. So, anything that is left out and anything that you can add to it and keep it in your own mind and in your own heart to have gratitude for in your own way.

(00:04:29):

And so then, we carry on to the thunder beings, the thunder beings who come from the west. And we know that they can carry a powerful, they have a great strength. They have strength enough to uproot trees. And we're reminded of that. That we have no control of the elements and the duties that they have. Although we can always show our gratitude that they're carrying the waters, when they bring the waters and to bring gentle winds when they come through. And we ask them that to be gentle because we know their strength can be powerful.

(00:05:08):

And so, we kindly and respectfully put our minds together as one and give a great gratitude to all the things that was planted and all the things that was put down here for us so that we and our turn to walk about on Mother Earth can be in peace and contentment. And so, we'll let it be that way in our minds.

(00:05:27):

And we direct our thoughts to the sun, our elder brother, the sun who carries on each and every day without fail his responsibility to help warm the earth, to warm our bodies, warm our Mother Earth so that she can carry on her duties too, and the balance of providing for us. And as she provides for us, we provide gratitude back each and every day as well as the responsibilities of the sun each and every day without fail. And so, it's a reminder to us to have that gratitude without fail each and every day for what's put here for us.

(00:06:08):

And then we direct our thoughts to our grandmother moon, who carries the great responsibility and she has the authority or the original instruction to provide the way the currents flow, the way the water flows here on Mother Earth. She watches over Mother Earth as a grandmother would.

(00:06:33):

And she also has the great responsibility of the flow of water that each and every one was in for nine months before we even took a breath. And so, she's in control of the future generations from the faces yet to come. And the future is in the responsibility of our grandmother, the moon, who still carries on that responsibility.

(00:06:57):

And working with the stars, all the many, many stars that are there to guide us at night and guide us and direct us into certain times of the years of our ceremonies and certain times destinations that we travel, they can guide us in the direction in the proper way. And so, we kindly and respectfully bundle all that gratitude together of one mind and share it with all the sky beings who are carrying on their work.

(00:07:27):

And we direct our thoughts now to a message that we received from Sganyodaiyo. Handsome Lake, he's called in English and he was a messenger that these new different ways of people's lives will be coming into our house and that they're coming in in great numbers and they're coming in to stay. And so that, it's telling us how that we can live with them and keep our own ways in which we do, but to include them in our thoughts because they're in our house.

(00:08:14):

And there's many, there's what? Four, six days of that message. So, to just put it in that we give thanksgiving to Sganyodaiyo, it's almost like putting a dot over an eye of the whole book because there's so much in that message. There's prophecies in there which that we've seen, which I'm sure Orin have seen many more than I have prophecies that come true.

(00:08:45):

And so, there's the prophecies, there's warnings and there's encouragements to live in peace and harmony. And the main part for us to live in peace and harmony is to carry on who we are with the gratitude that was given to us with the original instructions and that we do. And so, we give great gratitude for a reminder of that message to carry on the gratitude. So, we let it be that way in our minds.

(00:09:16):

And then we direct our thoughts to creator, creator who has put down here and planted all of what we need to be at peace and contentment. And so, he sat down here a way to share the love that he had put in to us as beings so that we can be at peace and amongst ourselves to share with others. And so, that is still in our minds, still going on, on a smaller scale than we all would hope for, but it's still going on amongst us. And so, therefore, we share a great gratitude that it was gifted to us in that way. And so, we let it be that way in our minds.

(00:10:03):

And so, that's a short translation of Ganoñhéñ•nyoñ, Thanksgiving address. It's not a prayer. We're not pleading for anything. But the only part in there that we acknowledge some sort of that direction would be with the winds to be gentle as they come through our villages because we know their strength. And so, we carry this on whether the meetings are small, gatherings are small or large, whether it's a clan meeting, council meeting, ceremonial. And like I said, some speakers will wrap you right in as one with their words and find detail of all the responsibilities. And so, when you look at the responsibilities that was given to us with the original instructions of humans, the details of environmental justice are in there. They're all in there. He talks about the balance. Orin mentioned sometimes he's told us about the wolves being put back into the Yellowstone and what they did for the whole forest. That's all in there, too, if you want to look at it that way. What you do get, these people that do researches find the small print they call it.

(00:11:44):

So, when you look at the Ganoñhéñ•nyoñ and our instructions to our Mother Earth and to our beings, plant beings, animal beings, to all our beings, it's in there if you go do the research and study and pay attention. And so, when you talk about environmental justice, it begins with gratitude. And so, to share that gratitude, we hear before what Orin mentioned. I like to quote Orin because he's got such sharp quotes, he talks about his young age and how many people are populating the earth. And he talks about today and how many people, eight billion people, something like that. And he says, "How do you instruct eight billion people to their responsibility to Mother Earth?"

(00:12:47):

And that's still question is still to be answered. But when I heard the question I thought, it's in our teachings. It's already in there. It's in the Thanksgiving address. It talks about the children's faces yet to come and our responsibility to look out for them. It talks about the decisions you make are of gratitude.

(00:13:09):

And so, we're always constantly reminded of the decisions that you make today as individuals, as a council, as a community are to no way negatively affect seven generations coming. So, the instructions are in there. The answer is in there. It's just how do you get it out to eight billion

people. And to this day, these days, how this world works is around the dollar sign and the ones with no money are seldom listen to, seldom heard. That's why you got so many homeless people here.

(00:13:54):

Them homeless people, if you listen to them, they're more close to the earth than the one who gets off their pavement into their rubber-tired car and going into their houses never touched the earth. Going a building apartment, building elevator, they never touched the earth. But they're the ones who want you to listen to them. They have no real connection to the Mother Earth.

(00:14:23):

Now, if you go through these homeless people and the poor people, the ones with their hands in the dirt, they know that feeling. They have that connection as well as the forest. They're the ones who feel it. You talk to the indigenous communities and populations anywhere in the world, those are the ones you'll get the answers from. They're the ones who are barefoot on earth. Their hands are in the soil. They're the closest to their mother yet to survive and share gratitude.

(00:14:56):

So, they don't listen to the newscast, they don't listen to Wall Street and the Dow Jones and all of that because it doesn't affect what responsibility they have today to provide for their future generations. So, when you look at the dam like that big dam that just took up in Klamath River, and you see the reports of how it's recovered because those fish were able to swim over that rock that their ancestors fish used to swim under and over and lay their eggs.

(00:15:34):

So, when you follow nature's original instructions like we do the best that we can, that's what's going to think this world survive and for future generations to come. And so, when you turn close the curtain just a little bit and start drilling over here and pumping oil across the river upstream, just because you can't see it, that doesn't mean it's not going to cause damage because they're not made forever like everything else. It's temporary.

(00:16:11):

We're only here for a short time and our responsibilities are to look out and make sure that what we do here, that what we leave when we're done here is better, or just as how you found it when you were here for future generations. It's all each and every one of our responsibilities and it's in our teachings.

(00:16:34):

And so, that's the short version of the opening. And it's just another short reminder that our teachings have ... We're survivors. We're going through it again today, just putting it back in survival mode with the attacks on all our surroundings. And so, if we can survive genocide a couple times in our history, then we can probably survive another genocide, that's the attempts that are coming on us, which are from what I understand, the financials.

(00:17:15):

In today's day and age, we're not living off the earth as well as we should be in conducting our own food source as individual homesteaders, individual nations and communities. So, it's a reminder to us, whoever's in charge of your food sources, basically in charge of you and your survival. That has to change back to our own responsibilities as individuals, as families, as a clan, as a family, as a nation. It has to go back that way. It has to start with the family.

Oren Lyons (00:17:59):

Yeah, I thought it was important for you to hear our perspective. You're in our country, and combine that, combine your mission and understand that when you come into Indian country right across the country, they have very much the same what you just heard. We know all about life, relationship. And as you can see, it's a responsibility, as you know, you carry responsibility.

(00:18:42):

And so, we maintain this in our longhouse. We are not Christians, but this is what we follow and this is what you will find almost right across the country. The Christian doctrine that was come over here on the Niña, the Pinta and the Santa Maria left a hard mark on us, a hard mark. And we are, as he said, we're survivors. We're still here and we still keep that word. Our longhouse ceremonies are long and they follow basically what our opening words are. And we were instructed that we start every meeting with those words, big or small, and start that.

(00:19:50):

And since you're in the spirituality business, you should have some comprehension of what we think about that and how we understand that. And so, we have, as you've heard, we have a responsibility for future generations. We have to maintain what we have as good as we can so that those faces that are looking up from the earth, each layer awaiting its time that they have what we have today. That's a responsibility. And a lot of people today, imagine, a lot of people today.

(00:20:48):

We survived, pretty close got wiped out almost, but we survived that first. And now, we see that the situation in the world today, very tenuous and we've changed the system that we live in over a long period of time. We've changed that system. We've affected it. And you can't fix it. It's beyond your fixing. You've changed it and the change is not good. And we're beginning to see that now.

(00:21:46):

We talk, as you heard, seven generations. And those generations are the full lifetime, not that shortcut 20 years to talk about. That's childhood 20 years. So, the full generation seven times, that's what we're looking at. And we remind our people to have that long vision to protect those coming generations and all the life. And he went through. We're not just responsible to human beings, we're responsible to all life. We went through that litany, all the fish, all the animals, everything right down to the grass, we're responsible.

(00:22:38):

And in my lifetime, I'm pretty old now, I've seen a lot of changes, really amazing changes. I grew up in a horse and buggy, yeah. 1930 is a long time ago. It was just changing at that time. Cars were just coming. There was one car on the Onondaga territory and everybody walked, everybody planted. When we went to the store, we bought bulk stuff. The stores not look what you see today. Back there in the day, there were bushels and you bought things in bulk. And then you went back and you made your food with it. They last a long time that way. It's quite different today.

(00:23:49):

And so, I thought that since you are in the business of spirituality, so to speak, you should have the perspective of native people and understand that we've been here a long time, long time. And we have instructions. When we have these big gatherings of native people around the country, they always ask an elder something like how Jake spoke to open the meeting. And whoever speaks, he speaks in their language. And if it's Lakota or it's Cheyenne or Nez Perce, many, many languages here, it doesn't matter because we know what they're saying because it's always the same.

(00:24:51):

So, one man can stand or one woman can stand and speak for everybody because our minds are the same. And that goes to Central America and South America. I understand that. And so, in your mission, you're young people and you're traveling now, you're learning. And one of the major instructions that we received, number one instruction is respect and respect for yourself and respect for whoever you're speaking to and respect for the earth and respect for everything. That's a law. That's a law. And if you carry that law, life is good. Life is good. So, respect. And then the other one that we have is sharing. We share, share everything equally. So, when your ideas of capitalism came over here and hooray for me and the hell with everybody, not a good idea as far as we're concerned. It might be a good idea for the individual who has all the money now, but what about the rest? What about the rest of the people?

(00:26:35):

So, you are in a mission and you're going to be traveling. And so, I thought it would be helpful for you to have some idea of some of the people you're going to be talking to and understand that they know everything that you just heard, probably more.

(00:27:04):

And so, the mission, your mission is, well, I don't know to be in your shoes, how I would approach that, but I just wanted you to have some comprehension of the native people of this country and probably pretty much around the world because when we meet with other native people in Europe and so forth, pretty much the same, and pretty much the same with all people, not just native people. Everybody life is the same, not very different.

(00:27:47):

I think it's important to enlarge your perspective in that direction. It'll help you when you come to other nations to understand it as elders sitting there that know a lot. And we've always been taught to be respectful, respectful to the speaker. So, when someone in our confederation is standing, no one interrupts them. So, we stand and we speak and they listen. And so, I think this meeting here is what I'm sharing, and it would be interesting to me and our people here that here are some of your thoughts and what your mission is.

Philip P. Arnold (00:29:12):

So, I'd like to welcome everyone to the Skä•noñh Center. My name's Phil Arnold. I think I know everyone anyway. And I was the founding director of the Skä•noñh Center. I wanted to just take a minute at the beginning or one of the beginnings of this event to acknowledge the life and work of Sally Roesch Wagner. It's maybe not too much to say that we wouldn't have been able to create the center, and this is exactly what we wanted to create the center to do is to have indigenous and settler colonial people put it that way, coming together and trying to work out maybe a possible future.

(00:30:06):

So, we're looking at the past, but we're looking at the future. And that was really a spirit of Sally's work that I hope we can continue. She had just finished a manuscript called Survival is Indigenous, that I don't know the status of it right now, but I would love to see it be published. She was also working on another one. She was working on at least two or three books.

(00:30:39):

So, that's where my mind goes because part of what we're doing here, and many of you already know this, is trying to carry the work further in terms of more research, more writing, and generate more resources that we can use in the class or classroom.

(00:31:05):

So, we're here to talk about the doctrine of Christian Discovery. The Jesuits and Laudato Si. And we have experts in the room on many of these topics. But the whole context of this is Defending Mother Earth. That's the subtitle of the panel here. The work on the doctrine of discovery, I feel has been going on for a long time, but in many ways it's just beginning because the more we're looking at archival work in old texts and documents, the more we tend to know and appreciate, if I can put it this way, and I don't want to offend anyone, but how Christianity was built. So, we're meeting to get today this sparse crowd because of the No Kings marches around the country protesting Donald Trump's authoritarian kind of approach to ruling people are outraged that are democratic norms and all of the ideas about democratic principles have eroded.

(00:32:36):

For myself, for our family, this is not very surprising because what we've always felt is that we to investigate the origins of these problems, pernicious problems, which go back millennia. Didn't happen the day before yesterday, didn't happen in the '24 election.

(00:33:00):

It happened millennia ago.

(00:33:04):

Academics are continuously looking at the origins of Christianity, the origins... It was frankly built and created to support kings, to justify the divine right of kings, caesars, if you like even at the very beginning.

(00:33:24):

When we think about the origins of the doctrine of Christian discovery, where they literally come in with the documents that say, if Christians enter the lands of non-Christian people, those lands, their bodies and all their worldly possessions automatically are deeded to the sponsoring king, the pope, etc.

(00:33:48):

Those legal formulations in the 15th century didn't come out of nowhere either. They go back.

(00:33:57):

Now, and as I said, there's continual conversations about this among academics, biblical studies people and other historians, medieval historians and others who are trying to reinterpret many of these texts that have been looked and worked over many times.

(00:34:26):

The colonists came in with the idea of empire, with the idea of divine kingship.

(00:34:38):

I want to personalize this a little bit because Sandy and I have been traveling all over the world doing genealogical work. This is something that actually Jake has put me onto way back many decades ago because he said, "How is it that you come to be here? What is it that we all come to be here? What is our story? What's our legacy?"

(00:35:05):

It ends up that I had six ancestors on the Mayflower, one of which was William Bradford. If you know anything about the pilgrims, he was a big deal. I've got a cousin here in the back here. We've been around for over 400 years in this territory. I can go on but I'm not going to.

(00:35:35):

The things you discover are amazing but after 400 years, does that mean we're indigenous? No. Absolutely not. So what are we talking about here? It's not about being in a place for a long time. It's about having and inhabiting a worldview. What we're giving today by Jake and Orin and the Onondaga Nation is a worldview that is at odds with the world that was created by the doctrine of Christian discovery. We're just inhabiting the later period of what is the logical conclusion of colonialism. The doctrine of discovery is not something that is just old. It's precise in a way. In a way, it's very precise historically. We can look at it, we can study it, but then it also is everywhere. Donald Trump is probably the logical conclusion of the doctrine of discovery. It's not a surprise. The democratic principles that we hear ringing in people's speeches and everything have to include the natural world. Have to.

(00:37:13):

The democratic principles of the Haudenosaunee that came out of this lake that inspired the founding fathers and the founding mothers of the women's movement was not just for human beings, it was for all beings. What the founding fathers took up as their mantle for democracy was just a small bit of what the Haudenosaunee were constantly trying to communicate from 16, 13, all the way to the present.

(00:37:52):

What's ironic... I'll give you an example of what we're talking about.

(00:37:56):

What we're doing is that the Jesuits were here. Only a few steps from here, they built a fort. They came 1656 and they were forced out in 1658. It was a failed mission and yet that has been celebrated in Syracuse. It's really just a minor blip on the historical screen and yet that has been celebrated over and over and for over a hundred years here.

(00:38:28):

The Jesuits were here. What did they come to do? They came to convert, and that meant forcibly get the Onondaga to submit to the king of France and the pope. They wanted to create another kind of peasant class in the Americas. They came with the deed for 600 square miles to Onondaga Lake when they arrived.

(00:39:04):

The irony is all through the 17th century, the Jesuits and the Jesuit relations are describing the Haudenosaunee and other native groups that they encounter and they're saying things like, "The women feel like they have control of their own bodies," as if it were outrageous. They're saying things like, "The men listen to the women. Can you imagine that?"

(00:39:40):

That's where we discover that the ideas and all the principles of the Haudenosaunee and other native confederacies are making inroads into the minds of Europeans. It's through this negative analysis, almost like looking through a negative, that you can see that...

(00:40:08):

We have a Fulbright scholar here who can't make it today, but she's gone through all 74 volumes of the Jesuit relations over the last six months and has unpacked all of these aha moments of the Jesuits. What that leads to is that the French, for example, start to get the idea, "Oh, maybe freedom isn't just submitting to a monarch or submitting to a priest or a pope." You have the origins of not only democracy, but the enlightenment that are embedded in those Jesuit relations but always in a strange flip-side way.

(00:41:05):

I'll just... Another book called The Dawn of Everything that came out probably five years ago actually talks about how native people developed whole philosophical systems, how they develop scientific analysis, and the women's liberation movement in Europe out of this lake. Out of this lake.

(00:41:36):

The script is being flipped, and that's maybe the good news, but the bad news is that we need to continually look to foundational issues, I think, and doctrine of discovery in the Jesuits and Laudato si'? I always look at Christi in that context, this idea that church now wants to approach the whole issue of environmental healing.

(00:42:08):

I want to just say something else too, because then I'm going to have Jake take it.

(00:42:13):

But the Jesuits were here and they describe their time here, which was about 18 months, and that's also in the Jesuit relations. But as early... Going back at least 150 years ago or more, there's another story, Onondaga story of that encounter.

(00:42:40):

You have the text of the Jesuit relations that recounts that story, but we also have a wampum belt that recounts this story. This is a copy of a wampum belt that I think is... It's six nations maybe. And I've heard Orin tell this story before. But it's an old story that I've read in other documents at Onondaga Historical Association, for example.

(00:43:09):

But this is the belt that recounts a very different perspective on what the Jesuits were trying to do. And so by comparing the Jesuit relations with the wampum belt, you can arrive at another version of what actually happened.

(00:43:34):

We know something intensely negative happened between the Onondaga and the Jesuits because there has not been a Catholic church on Onondaga Nation territory ever. It was a failed mission in so many ways.

(00:43:55):

But in this work, in this doctrine of discovery work, we reach out to everybody because there are many Christians who are trying to repair this history and even their own tradition, even their own religious traditions in many ways. This is the kind of work that I am really devoted to and I'm glad that we're able to have this meeting today.

Oren Lyons (00:44:26):

I just wanted to...

(00:44:26):

Jake, let's hold this up.

(00:44:26):

This is our confederacy belt of union. Starting from the east is the Mohawks, the Oneida, the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Seneca, and later came to Tuscarora made a six, but this is the original.

(00:44:49):

In the center here, the Onondaga is the great tree of peace. If you look at the, or listen to the history, they talk about the fierce Iroquois, the killers. They're called a lot of names but in the reality, this is who we are. Peace. We tried and we tried, we tried to maintain that.

(00:45:20):

During the 400 years, the Haudenosaunee were prominent there. Instead, we had at least 85 nations under our wing and our influences all the way down to Mississippi, down to Georgia, across and up that section. But that was our influence. We didn't control or we didn't rule. We supported the people in there.

(00:45:49):

But in the center is the great tree of peace, and that's the foundation of our confederation. Peace. Equity for the people and union, the strength of the five nations come together. Great union based on peace.

(00:46:12):

Today, it is starting to come back around now, people like yourself sitting here talking about this business because it's important. As you know, world peace is the only solution there is to what's going on. Nothing else. That's our mission. It's been our mission all this time.

(00:46:36):

We really welcome you here for this opportunity to exchange some of our thoughts so you understand.

(00:46:47):

But the missionaries that you sent over here, they were over here early. Long, long ago. They were like a spearhead. They came in and everything else followed them in. We were almost eliminated. They were almost... But we survived.

(00:47:10):

We're still here and the issue is still here and this belt is really still here. That should be in the minds of all human beings. World peace. It's the only solution, nothing else.

(00:47:27):

I'm glad that you brought the belt. I understand, but we have many belts like this.

(00:47:37):

This is a thousand years old. This idea. At least a thousand. It could be two. We don't know.

(00:47:46):

But foundational thinking and of course, the principle is always spiritual unity, spiritual law prevails all the time, every time, everywhere, every day. You are not going to change that. That's the law. It's nature, that's nature.

(00:48:16):

The only thing could happen is that we eliminate ourselves. Human beings are like fleas on the dog. You all are little bickering here, but the dog is pretty big. That's where we have to be careful. We don't want them to shake. That's where we are.

(00:48:39):

I think your mission or your travels broaden your experience and get perspectives and understand that the indigenous people of Western Hemisphere, very old. Very, very old with a lot of perspective. I think that after white people never came over here and we were always here, we would never have invented an airplane. Never.

(00:49:17):
But anyway, that's just some of my thoughts. I'd like to hear some response and perspective.

Christiana Zenner (00:49:30):
Hi, everybody.
(00:49:31):
Thank you for coming on this strange but precedented day in long history.
(00:49:38):
Thank you to the Onondaga Nation for having us here and for you, amazing, generous hosts and knowledge keepers, for welcoming us in because my settler colonial Jesuit academic ilk have not always been good to the traditions and knowledge of those who've come long before, so thank you. It's an honor and I'm humbled and it feels like a privilege.

Oren Lyons (00:50:07):
Good.

Christiana Zenner (00:50:08):
I would prefer to sit and listen to many others all day.
(00:50:13):
But this work that began as my own professional work in many ways has, also in the last six months, taken root with Kim Carfore, who's here from University of San Francisco, and who does amazing work that she'll tell us about. And then expanding to Phil and Sandy whose incredible work here and also connecting with settler colonial university institutions.
(00:50:48):
Phil, your book, The Urgency of Indigenous Values is one that I teach at Fordham with my students.
(00:50:57):
Chip Callahan, who's here from Gonzaga, has been a conversation partner. We've been working on a project on religion in extractive zones and how that has looked historically and how that continues looking in the present mode.
(00:51:15):
But my name is... I forgot that.
(00:51:19):
Details.
(00:51:21):
My name is Christiana or Christi Zenner. I am coming to you most proximately from the New York area. I teach at Fordham University, which is on Lenape lands, in an area of which many of us know the history in shorter spans.
(00:51:46):
One of the streams that brought me to this work, this what is my mission or what is the story of how on earth did I get here, is through waters.
(00:51:57):

As someone who was born in the west of this country and grew up in the states known as California and Colorado in the current geopolitical formation, I was very attuned to water's absences and how valued it was economically and politically and contested.

(00:52:16):

Fast-forwarding a lot of years, I realized that among my academic passions and teaching passions and learning passions was this question of what sort of thing is water and who gets to decide and what are the values that should guide, and do guide, different kinds of societies in different places so that we can learn better about how to be in relation with one another and the waters that flow.

(00:52:48):

Anyway, I won't get into all the academic details, but I ended up getting hired at Fordham.

(00:52:53):

I did my PhD in religious studies. There was one chapter in that dissertation, which was on valuing water. The one chapter in the dissertation was on Catholic social teaching and the way that what I saw then, this is like 2008, '09, '10, I graduated in 2011 with my PhD, that the Catholic Church was somewhat surprisingly, to me, turning to questions of ecology.

(00:53:18):

Not yet, I wrote down what you said, Phil, environmental healing. I don't know that the church is about that yet but we'll see.

(00:53:27):

I wrote this one chapter and I said, "It's interesting. I think there's this turn towards ecology going on in Catholic social teaching, and water seems to be something that the pope at least is concerned about."

(00:53:42):

I published a book about that in order to get tenure. There's pragmatism in my story too.

(00:53:50):

And then Pope Francis was elected in 2013 and he signaled very early on that he wanted to be attuned to creation and to poverty.

(00:54:02):

2015, he writes this document, it's called an Encyclical. It's in the form of a letter. It's very authoritative of status as texts go in a text-obsessed tradition like Catholicism.

(00:54:19):

It was about ecology understood as relations between which are, of course in Catholicism, hierarchical between God and humans, and then humans envy each other and humans in the natural world. Because I was in a theology science and ethics position at a Jesuit university and had written this book that explained some of these trajectories of the Catholic Church's turn to ecology, I was swept up into this interpretation of Laudato si'.

(00:54:55):

Being part of that has been really interesting. Not easy. It's a curious thing to be in a Jesuit theology department and to be seen as a feminist theologian who represents the tradition when I don't represent the tradition, and I don't understand myself as a theologian, but I do understand myself as a feminist.

(00:55:18):

To try to walk that line of what is the good that maybe said here and what are the histories we have to take account of and the problematic frameworks that are being put forward in this document, and how do we talk about those as scholars and powerful white settler people in the world who go to Davos and make policy decisions and all of that.

(00:55:51):

There have been a couple of really big worries that I have about that document and the way that it participates in and reveals a lot about Catholic thought. These won't come as surprises to certainly not to my esteemed elders at this table, but probably not to anyone here either.

(00:56:16):

That's the question of Christian triumphalism and histories of settler colonialism and domination, related questions of hierarchies of gender, male over female, but also hierarchies between spirit and matter, hierarchies between knowledge systems and ways of knowing Western so-called over indigenous, and then has become abundantly clear, this turned to indigenous values that Pope Francis wrote about in Laudato si'. Bill McKibben, climate activist, wrote in 2015 in the New York Review Books, "The pope's turn to indigenous values is quite remarkable given that this is an institution that have first set out to colonize the world."

(00:57:25):

Everything depends on the heart in which that is written and the spirit of openness and accountability and repair that actions go forward in.

(00:57:40):

But the way that those claims are articulated has always given me a lot of pause because it's within a Christian theological framework, and there is room given to the very real fact that indigenous communities know their lands and what constitutes wellbeing best and need decision-making authority and yet there's still a narrowing of focus on indigenous traditions and their relationship with God, like the language of God, the Creator in the singular Christian form is still used.

(00:58:22):

My worry is the Catholic Church, once again, using the language of enculturation and openness, but replicating the same dangers this time in an ecological moment.

(00:58:36):

The last thing I'll say is that the work of Phil and Sandy and so many others has been really powerful to me as a way to recognize the depth of the doctrine of discovery and how that shows up in Laudato si', that these histories have not been sufficiently recognized despite many movements by indigenous peoples worldwide to have them recognized, and when somewhat recently the Catholic Church said, "Oh, right, let us say a few words about the doctrine of discovery," it was simply to distance itself from it, which is not ownership or accountability or repair.

(00:59:22):

That's part of why I'm here, is to, because I find myself curiously emplaced in this Jesuit context, try to learn what best practices would look like, what little I can do in the positionality that I have as a professor and a writer and a conversation partner and learner, and to try to honor the fact that learning and healing do not get to be easily achieved with the swipe of a pen of someone powerful, no matter how people [inaudible 01:00:05] his title.

(01:00:09):

That's me.

Oren Lyons (01:00:11):
Yeah.

Christiana Zenner (01:00:12):
Thanks for having us.
(01:00:13):
There were other things that I had very thoroughly thought out to say, but life is long, and so our conversation.
(01:00:23):
Yeah. So thanks.
(01:00:25):
Kim, would you like to? Or Sandy or Chip?

Kim Carfare (01:00:27):
Hi. everyone.
(01:00:34):
I'm Kim Carfore. I come from the Bay Area right now. I was born and raised in Michigan, and I find that my heart and my soul and my roots are very much in Michigan.
(01:01:10):
When I came in here and I saw the map that included the lower peninsula of Michigan, which is where I'm from. They always say, "Where are you on the map?" I'm right here. I was born and raised in Port Huron on Lake Huron, where Lake Huron gets really skinny and then it gets a little bit wider. In that very skinny part, there was a bridge. I grew up, it was about a five-minute drive.
(01:01:46):
My favorite place to be was to look at the Blue Water Bridge.
(01:01:51):
The water was so blue and it was so strange to me that I could see Canada. It didn't make any sense to me. How can I live in America and be an American citizen and then look and see Canada? The air we breathe is obviously the same and the water that we touch is the same, but yet we live in such different laws, like Oren talks about law and the law of Mother Earth.
(01:02:25):
I guess from a young age, I thought about, "Well, who gets to choose laws and why are they the established norms that we exist by?" It seems very top-down. Somebody decided this and then we all as people of the earth just this is how we relate to each other and this is how we relate to the land. And those are different based upon what someone chooses.
(01:02:56):
I think that's where I came from and that's how I started thinking about the differences between the laws of man and the laws of humans versus the laws of nature.
(01:03:14):
I got a degree in psychology at the University of Michigan, because I was obsessed thinking about what makes people tick. Why do people behave in the way they do? I was so curious about what caused wars and why are these people nice to each other.
(01:03:37):

And so then after that, I ended up getting a job. My first job after college, it was a wilderness therapy program. I went from university to then living close to nature where we backpacked. We did two weeks in the wilderness and two weeks off doing whatever I wanted. I didn't have a home on my off time.

(01:04:08):

I felt that living in that rhythm really deconstructed what I would consider the laws of humans or the laws of land, because I didn't look at my watch like Father Time and Mother Earth, which seemed so the way these dualistic laws, which were very normalized in society or civilization were deconstructed when I just lived and taught in the wilderness.

(01:04:37):

What we did was, okay, we got to eat. We got to make sure that... Okay, is everybody okay? Are we hiking to the next place?

(01:04:47):

I think my body started to feel into those rhythms. So the winter, the days were short, and so we went to bed at 4:00 PM and then we got up at 6:00 AM.

(01:04:58):

When my body was attuned to those rhythms, I could no longer go back to the structures of humans or man or society or university in the same way. Now, I feel like, "Okay, so why would you get a PhD?"

(01:05:17):

Back to Oren, your question, "What is your mission?" That really struck me at my core, especially because the connotations of the word mission are very historically traumatic for indigenous peoples. The missions of Jesuits and Catholics and forcing everybody to live in this human realm. So I was like, "Oh, I don't want to talk."

(01:05:50):

What is your mission? I didn't come here... Even I think someone called me an expert, I'm like, "I don't feel like an expert. I'm not an expert in anything."

(01:05:59):

But

(01:06:00):

My mission I think ... I lost my train of thought, going back to ... What was I talking about before?

Audience member 1 (01:06:11):

Why get a PhD? All this-

Kim Carfare (01:06:13):

Oh, thank you. Yeah, why get a PhD? I think a lot about, and I can never remember who quoted this, Adrienne Rich or Audre Lorde, but she says, "This is the colonizer's language, yet I need it to talk to you." So I thought, okay, if I can force myself back into that, the laws of man, then maybe I can communicate to people that there's another way, and so I'm here. I never really know what that looks like, but I think that's my mission. To be a little bit more specific in terms of why am I here at the Ska-nonh Center, I'm really interested in thinking about building coalitions of mutual support.

(01:07:08):

I don't know what that looks like, but once again, leading with this idea of protecting Mother Earth and to go back to what you said Orrin yeah, of course I know. I don't have anything to teach you, that's ridiculous. I didn't want to get out of my seat because I don't even feel like I want to be up here speaking. I know the power of words. I'm not here to teach anything, but I do want to use my mind and my labor and my body and my services. I don't like the word "body" in connotations of the feminist, using your body or something, but I want to use what I have to offer this world for to do good work.

(01:07:59):

I think that's a big question. What does it mean to do good work coming from a settler colonial perspective? I want to learn, I want to stay in my lane, but I also want to know what can I do from my positionality to develop material relationships? Something, what can that look like for the future? I think I had planned to talk about the feminist movement and how it relates to the doctrine of Christian discovery, but these are the words that I have for now. I really thanks for listening and I really do want to honor Sally Roesch Wagner. I was very shocked to hear that this morning, but I want to honor her life and her legacy as well. Thank you.

Oren Lyons (01:09:13):

There's two men here, Adoc over here. Raise your hand, Adoc sitting there and Jake, these are iron workers. They put up your buildings in those big cities.

Audience member 1 (01:09:34):

Thank you.

Oren Lyons (01:09:34):

80 stories, 90 stories. That was these guys right here and around the bridges and all of that. A lot of our men did that job. It started with the Mohawks, the bridge up there. There was good money in it so they went, so they can tell you a whole lot of stories here. I spent some years in New York myself on Madison Avenue, I worked in advertising. You ain't going to tell me anything about, we have a broad perspective here. [inaudible 01:10:17].

(01:10:19):

I came back here and I'm working with the nation. I got to be a teacher, I was a university professor at the University of Buffalo for 37 years too as well. We've been around, there's a broad perspective here and appreciate the fact that you're traveling and learning. This is how you learn, absorb that, and travel. Not much knowing about native people here. In this lake right here, you're on this lake here. That's the birthplace of democracy here. It's where our first meeting was held, the peacemaker. Nobody knows for sure how many years ago, but long time ago, way before our white brothers came across the water, very old, but right here on this lake started the Haudenosaunee. That was I would say the birthplace of democracy as we know it today.

(01:11:28):

Pretty much I had to learn that, I didn't know much. I was just a kid running in the woods on a dog hunting or fishing, not for fun, for survival. The Onondaga, the nation number where the council fire for the Six Nations, where we have the big meetings you have here at Onondaga, at the longhouse, but there are longhouses in all of the Six Nations. W have almost I would say half-and-half of our people in Canada as well, way back to Montreal and Ontario. We have people all the way to Oklahoma. We have a broad perspective and a broad part of the early history of travel and moving, I'll come we're over there. All of that is a story, but here at Onondaga, this is the story of the great peace and the great peacemaker. This lake, you're right

on it, you're right where it started, right here, right on this lake here. It's interesting enough that that's the most polluted body of water in the country right here also. Interesting.

(01:13:18):

It's very sacred. We had fortunate to have a lot of good leaders and teachers in our family and in our nation. [inaudible 01:13:38] mother was one of our great leaders. She made an odd statement one time, a offhand remark here about this. She says "What they call Onondaga Lake here." She says, "That wasn't our name for it." She says, "Our name for it means 'where the leaves touch the water.' That's the name of that lake," but our brothers, white brothers came here and they called Onondaga because that's where we are. We've been here a long time, but you'll find if you go back and you start looking in the history and start looking, there are history books with all the old names, with the Indian names on it.

(01:14:29):

Very interesting because the names are descriptive. They just tell what it is or what it's doing. There's a lot of it in your history. You have it in your books, but you got to go dig it out. I didn't know that because when I became ... Well, your system is amazing system. I had to quit school in the seventh grade. First of all, because I didn't like the teachers, they didn't like me either. We had come from the reservation school in the sixth grade and then we came down to the school in downtown and that was a lot of trouble. I had to go hunting anyway for the family. I couldn't be going to school every day. I had to hunt for a living actually.

(01:15:35):

You're talking about 1930, '35, '37, '40. Ammunition was hard to come by because it was a war going on. Very difficult, very difficult. If you had three shells in your pocket, you better come back with three something because you couldn't afford to miss, a very different time. I grew up doing that, the war years. This country and our people always adapt to everything as we can. We keep our system, keep it strong, hard. We're probably the last of the traditional leadership still in charge of land in the country. A lot of the Indian nations now, most of them, 99% of the Indian nations are under the Bureau of Indian Affairs or in Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs. That's where they get their money, that's where their orders come from.

(01:16:50):

Here in Onondaga, this chief's here, he spent a long time in the chief's council. We're probably the last traditional government still in charge of land right here. Then of course when you come into the Onondaga Territory and you should go down and get lunch, we have a restaurant down there called Fire Keepers and it's a good one, everybody goes there. Anyway, I have to travel on to a next event today, so I can't stay around too much longer, but I appreciate your visit and your mission to learn. It's important and very hard to learn anything about Native people because they don't teach about us.

(01:18:06):

If you look and you try to find the history of the Onondagas, we're still tipping over wagon trains and we're still cutting down wires and so forth. That's a long history about that, why? The first boarding schools. They weren't boarding schools, they weren't boarding schools, they were institutions, mind-changing institutions that took our children. If you look at the pictures of those, one of the very famous school here in Pennsylvania, of all those kids sitting there, all and their hair is cut and they're all in uniform. There must be 300 of them sitting there and look carefully at every one of them, and not one of them is smiling, not one. Kids are always laughing, kids are always ... Not one smile.

(01:19:17):

That was captives, they were captured, they were taken from their families and some never got back. Those schools, so-called schools were brainwashing institutions and are quite a few of them. A lot in Canada, a lot in the US. That part of history you won't find in your history book. It's not taught, but we know it very well because we're the recipients of it and we're also the survivors. I do appreciate the fact that you're traveling and you're coming to hear these stories very directly. You're not going to get a better direct story right than [inaudible 01:20:07] sitting right here, because we've been fighting this thing for a long time. We were the first ones, we took a group over to Switzerland, they got out of the box, 1977, we got out of the box and we took our argument to the international world. It's been that way ever since.

(01:20:40):

In 1923, there was a chief from [inaudible 01:20:50] from Canada side and he took the argument over to Switzerland. He tried to get into the League of Nations and they wouldn't allow him to speak there because he was speaking against Canada in 1923. His name was Deskaheh, that's the chief's title, Cayuga chief. We have a chief today with that title because we passed these titles down and Deskaheh is still around, but at that time, there was Deskaheh. When we went to Geneva in '77, I was one of the people put that together and we got over there with no money, but we got there. We were headed for, it was not the League of Nations now. It was different, the United Nations, and we were going to get a voice there. We didn't carry a US passport, we made our own passport. That's what we traveled on, 1977, our own passport, because you have to maintain your integrity and your difference as a nation if you're going to have these very, very powerful documents they call treaties.

(01:22:44):

You can't be an American citizen and have a treaty with yourself. We maintain our integrity here as Onandaga Nation, the Haudenosaunee an independent sovereign, and we still travel on our own passports. Not easy, it's not easy. There's a lot of passport stories that are made. Anyway, we do, we try hard. It's coming around now, people are coming back, but suddenly here you are talking to us. For a long, long time we were over there. Survival time for humanity is what it is and that's very real and it's here right now. You think if you look at the weather, watch the weather around the United States and then watch how the heat's moving and make note of that and notice next year it's going to be much hotter. It's a compound effect, it's on its way. We've affected it, it's not going to get better because we got two major wars going on right now when they should be sitting down talking about the future of humanity, we got two big wars going on.

(01:24:25):

Leadership is not there so it's got to be local, it's got to be yourself. You got to do the leading, you got to speak up, the people got to speak up. We're pushing our existence as a species. We're a lot closer than people think. They're not watching that, involved in politics when they should be really talking about survival as a species. That's this Great Tree of Peace here. That's it, the only solution to all of this is peace. That's not the absence of war, I mean real peace, because when the peacemaker brought our people together and he put that tree, you uprooted the tree. He said, "Throw your weapons of war in there." The water's all taken away into, so I meant really put your weapons down. That's a long time ago, the good instruction. Not over, but we're pushing. We're really pushing people, not where, but you're not going to be able to ignore the heat next year no matter what. No matter what your politics are, it's going to get hot. It's going to get hot fast, faster. That's a common cause. We're human beings. We're not Black, white, red, or green. We're human beings, we're relatives. That's I always say we can exchange blood. You can't get closer than that. I don't care what color you are. If you're dying there, you're not going to ask what kind of blood do you get in a transfusion. That's common. We have to get back to that understanding of family, a human family. Then the foundation of that family is peace. That's principle basic, ground-to-earth, ground principle.

(01:26:59):

I appreciate your interest and your presence here and hope we can have added something to the discussion that's going on. I have to go to the next one so I got to leave right now. I thank you for your presence.

Jordan Brady Loewen-Colón (01:27:23):

Do you need help catching up on today's topic or do you want to learn more about the resources mentioned? If so, please check our website at podcast.doctrineofdiscovery.org for more information. If you like this episode, review it on Apple, Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts. Now back to the conversation.

Chip Callihan (01:27:43):

Okay, hello. Thank you everyone. [inaudible 01:27:46] My name's Chip Callahan. I teach in religious studies at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, a long way away. I first got to Gonzaga about 2018 is when I started there. I had come there from the University of Missouri where Phil also taught well before I got there. I'm trying to think how I can make this make sense.

(01:28:12):

There's a lot of reasons why I went up to Gonzaga, but I didn't go there initially to teach at Gonzaga. I went to Spokane for another reason and ended up being hired because they needed someone to teach a Native American religions class and that's not really what I do. I have issues with the whole language of Native American religions, but I had taken courses with a Mescalero Apache woman named Inez Talamantes at University of California, Santa Barbara. She had opened my eyes to different ways of doing class. She would take us for walks on the beach. It was Santa Barbara and saying, "This is your learning."

(01:28:53):

I thought, oh wow, okay. Therefore, I had also been teaching some Native American religion courses at University of Missouri, which was an interesting department of religious studies because from its founding, they insisted on teaching Asian religions, western religions and Indigenous religions. They say these all three are foundational to thinking about religion. Rather than calling it religion, I was thinking about religion. What does that even mean? Anyway, I end up, up there in Spokane and there's someone there who knows that I can teach this class, so they hire me to teach this class.

(01:29:36):

I say "class", but it was four sections of the class, so it was four classes of that. One of the first things I did was I realized Gonzaga has an Office of Tribal Relations, and that operates out of a house that they call the Native House, that is where Native American students hang out. I thought, well, if I'm going to be teaching this material as a white guy, I need to at least go check in and say "Hello." I was told that I was the first person from the department to have come over there and said "Hello." I thought, this is strange, but I'm going to try to work on cultivating this relationship.

(01:30:17):

Let me also say that when I was in Missouri, Missouri currently has no federally recognized tribes in the state, which is not to say there were no Native people there, but those tribes have been moved away. Also to be in eastern Washington where there are, I can't even think offhand right now, but many reservations within an hour's drive of Spokane, it was just a very different sense of place and sense of relationship between Native people and settlers. These things

started to come together and I thought, I'm teaching Native American religions or whatever that is in a place that is, a lot of my students were Spokane, Colville, Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai, all these different tribes around that area. I'm teaching this in a Jesuit school and I had never taught it at Jesuit school. I'm not Catholic. In teaching this history, I'm thinking this is a really explosive combination here potentially, but it didn't click for that so I started talking to Wendy Thompson a whole lot. She's the director of the Office of Tribal Relations. I have since come to find out, just yesterday maybe, I was looking up how many Jesuit schools have Offices of Tribal Relations. At least according to Google AI, it just kept coming back with Gonzaga. I don't think others do.

Audience member 1 (01:31:59):

I've never heard of it.

Chip Callihan (01:32:01):

The whole way I was then picturing, Jesuit schools, Jesuit universities operate under this idea of what they call Ignatian pedagogy, a way of teaching that was created by Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits. It emphasizes starting in place where you are and where the students are and having the material relate to the students, having the students reflect on the material and think, how does this pertain to me? You're not just learning stuff. You're trying to think about reflect on what does this have to do with me? I thought, well, to teach in a nation Jesuit pedagogical manner at a Jesuit school in this place, we need to think about how did this institution come to be in this place?

(01:32:54):

That means getting to really dig into this idea that the whole question of settler colonialism is one carried out by Jesuits among other people, and so we at that institution are part of that history. If you go to school at a Jesuit school, you can't just say that's something that happened somewhere else to someone else by someone else. You're part of this institution, the fact that you got an education in this place at the school means you're part of that history. We need to reflect on that. That's one piece of something I want to think about. Another is this. I start talking to Wendy Thompson, the director of the Office of Tribal Relations a whole lot about, she's thinking through, what is that? What is that title? What is the Office of Tribal Relations? What are we supposed to be doing? She thought there's two directions that goes. One is how does this university relate to these tribal communities? What can we do for you? What do you want from us? The other is helping students, Native students feel at home, feel like they are not alienated at the university.

(01:34:07):

Often she said "And I'm not sure some days why we're doing that, but that's something we want to do." We started talking a lot about how the problem so to speak is not so much, and this is coming back to these issues of the environment and ecology and stuff. I'll come to that in just a second, but part of the problem with all of this in recognizing Indigenous history, something Orrin was saying, saying "Nobody knows about the Haudenosaunee. Nobody knows about Onondaga, the history." Over the years teaching at this stuff at Gonzaga, it just comes home to me every semester. Nobody knows any of this. Even the students who think they know something about this know nothing about this because non-Native Americans don't know anything about this, because we don't teach it. Those who think they know something about it know all kinds of romanticized strange ideas, especially when they're in a class called Native American Religions. They think all kinds of crazy stuff.

(01:35:10):

I'm going to put that story aside for just a sec. Also, at Gonzaga we have something called the Institute on Climate, Water, and the Environment, which it started in 2018 I think. It's a really well-funded institute that studies those things, the climate, and water, and the environment and does a lot of stuff locally for working on that. As students, community members, and faculty working on projects, I remember a recent one was they measured the temperature in very different places around Spokane, the city of Spokane.

(01:35:52):

Maybe not surprisingly, found that places that don't have a lot of trees and are urban spaces are a lot hotter than the places where the people live that have lawns and trees and stuff like that. Correlating on a map, income levels and poverty with heat indexes and greenery and the fact that why are there so many poorer people getting hotter and sicker in the summers, et cetera? Then trying to do something about that, planting more trees, having air conditioners and fans, really good practical stuff, but maybe I can connect this by saying just this past year I had a student in a class who was an environmental studies major who apparently I learned this after the fact, but we read something in class about, I'm not sure who wrote it but a Native scholar wrote something about sustainability and relations between human and other than human beings in a place that he said made him understand sustainability much deeper and in a different way than he had.

(01:37:03):

I thought, this is an environmental studies major who does stuff with the Climate Institute. Somehow, he wasn't making the connections that this one thing that he read made everything click. I started to think all of these have something to do with each other. The Jesuit school in Spokane, the Jesuits, to think about what are the Jesuits doing in Spokane we have to think about, we had Phil and Sandy out last fall to talk about the Doctrine of Christian Discovery, you need to understand the Doctrine of Discovery to understand why were all these Christians coming to this place in the first place. As they were coming, also trying to undermine existing ways of knowing and relating to the land and replace that with ways of knowing and relating to land and to people that has caused the climate crisis that we have today.

(01:37:57):

Now you have, back to what Christy was saying, the former Pope writing about recovering Indigenous knowledge to help save the earth and the climate. This is coming from the same institution that undermined all that. To bring all this back to speaking to the Office of Tribal relations, we were thinking about how do we pull this stuff together? These are one story, the Doctrine of Christian Discovery, the Jesuits in this place, the displacement of Native people, and climate change are all one related story. People are wanting to somehow, they see that it's one story and they're saying, like the Pope was saying, "Let's care for the environment and let's learn from Indigenous knowledge" but the problem is that nobody knows anything, no non-Native people know these stories. Even at a place like Gonzaga that has tribal communities

(01:39:00):

Communities all around it has a lot of native students at the school, has an office of tribal relations, and has a mission statement all about social and environmental justice, and has a climate justice center. If nowhere else on earth, that place should be a place that can take as its mission to try to begin to undo some of this.

(01:39:28):

As a non-native professor myself, I'm sitting here thinking, "I'm not the one to propose the solutions here." Right? But what we ended up talking about a lot is that there's two sides to this issue. One is how does this history relate to native communities and what native communities want out of this history, or to reconcile with or whatever this history? But then the other side of it

is that the non-native people who all have this white guilt and want to solve these problems, they all say, "Oh, we need to do something, we need to do something," but they can't do something meaningful until they step back and learn this history.

(01:40:15):

So an issue for me and the students I teach that keep coming up is they all want to do something and they all see these interconnections, but they also don't know what they're talking about. And the question then is always, "What can we do? As white people, what's our role? What can we do?" And they all want to run off and help people. But I think that one thing that we want to really begin to recognize and emphasize as we start to work through these issues is that white people need to educate white people about this history. And not just what happened. You know, not just give them a book of historical facts, but really through...

(01:40:54):

One thing that I think religious studies and theology for you guys maybe allows us to do is to approach that history through not just a history of economics or history of politics or history of social development, but through the lens of how that whole process of colonization based on the doctrine of discovery is also a process of trying to replace a way of being in the world and understanding the world through certain kinds of relations with another.

(01:41:29):

And it's not just that we can just do what we're doing and then say, "Oh, but we can take these ideas from over there," but to recognize the wholeness of these different... And I say different, but I don't just want to make it sound like a binary. Because obviously the other thing that has to happen to understand this is that colonization is and was a process that is shared across the landscape of the Americas, and yet it always happened in particular ways and particular places. So as we as Jesuits recognize our ... Well, not Jesuits. As we who are employed by Jesuit institutions, right? And therefore have some kind of relationship, we're paid at the very least by Jesuits. If we are going to try to think about the doctrine of discovery and Laudato si' and what does it mean to care for the earth, and to somehow say that this has some kind of relationship to indigenous ways of knowing, I think each of these individual Jesuit institutions needs to figure out their own history and their own relationship to their place, to how they got to that place, and to their way of displacing native peoples, and then figure that out for themselves. And then we all need to come together.

(01:42:55):

And so there's, on the one hand, this big picture of colonization at Jesuit institutions, and also there are all these specific histories. And then we all need to make that a part of how we're teaching our students, that this is not just something that happened, but, "You are part of this history. Not in the abstract, but you're getting a degree from a place that exists in this place because of this history, and we're teaching you in a way that has been used to displace other ways of knowing." And so how can we begin to... One thing that they talk about at Jesuit institutions is what they call formation, how you form students, right? But how can part of your Jesuit formation, your formation of your identity, include the fact that you are not of this place originally and there are people that are of this place originally, and finding ways to make that a recognized piece of our understanding of who we are and where we are?

(01:43:54):

So that's a long way around maybe just to say when we're talking about these issues, I think that part of it needs to be the recognition that Jesuit institutions have a particular responsibility to teach this history in ways that connect them to the place and the original peoples of the place, and be a part of that. Not just tell it as like, "That's nice," but we're part of the displacement.

Sandy Bigtree (01:44:21):
Definitely.

Chip Callihan (01:44:22):
How do we replace that?

Sandy Bigtree (01:44:24):
And that's your identity, being displaced.

Chip Callihan (01:44:26):
Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (01:44:30):
Yeah, it's a real conundrum.

Chip Callihan (01:44:33):
It is.

Sandy Bigtree (01:44:33):
Because you're in the institution that has severed you from this special relationship to the earth. The full intention was to come and sever indigenous people from their identity with the earth. And so how does an institution heal when their institution is the problem? And Phil and I talk about that all the time.

Chip Callihan (01:44:55):
Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (01:44:56):
You know, how can you find the solution there?

Chip Callihan (01:44:58):
Yeah, [inaudible 01:45:01].

Sandy Bigtree (01:45:00):
And Jake in the Thanksgiving address is talking about the birds. We're not just listening to the birds singing. We're listening to the birds because they have something to tell us. That's the missing link. Because in educational institutions, you're taught to know, and you get your degree and you're the expert, and you're supposed to be conveying all this on other people. But a Haudenosaunee identity is built in this relationship, which I was trying to show in the tour. You know, Sky Woman Falls, it's the natural beings that save her and place her upon turtle's back. And she would never have existed had they not reached out to save her life.

(01:45:45):
And then establishing the clan systems, Jigonhsasee takes the women to the forest and following the peacemaker's instructions. They don't just say, "Oh, I think I'll be a deer clan." No. He said, "You will follow instructions and specific beings will present themselves to you," so where in the education, the colonial education, are we supposed to release knowing everything?

Jake Edwards (01:46:20):
I don't see it.

Sandy Bigtree (01:46:26):
Oh.

Jake Edwards (01:46:26):
I don't think he brought it in.

Sandy Bigtree (01:46:30):
So how are we supposed to release this hold of being an expert and learn and listen? And that's going to be really hard to do in a Christian institution.

Chip Callihan (01:46:45):
Yeah, and one thing we found in Gonzaga, is everybody has ideas about what we can do for the tribes, but-

Sandy Bigtree (01:46:53):
How about yourselves, you know?

Chip Callihan (01:46:53):
Exactly.

Sandy Bigtree (01:46:53):
That's planet, yeah.

Chip Callihan (01:46:56):
And when you ask, at least where I am, and I think it's going to be different in different places, but if you, apparently, because I haven't asked, but Wendy talks to the tribes all the time, what do they want? And what they want is a place that has knowledge like Gonzaga. They would like to turn attention to things like language revitalization.

Sandy Bigtree (01:47:18):
Absolutely.

Chip Callihan (01:47:19):
And food sovereignty, which is not what most-

Sandy Bigtree (01:47:21):
And so to turn what you can do, it's to empower these traditional practices among native communities. Because another thing that Jesuits and colonists did was supplant this hierarchical structure so that the people running these Indian nations all over the country are under this guise of a hierarchy government, which is not indigenous to any of these territories. So a lot of the native people there are also lost because they're not practicing their traditions. That's why it's so powerful here at Onondaga because they didn't go through that. They had churches on their territories, they had that iron fist silencing them, but they were able to sustain

their traditions. I don't know how they did it, but they did it. And there's these people exist all over the country, but they have no voice like the Onondaga do. I've said enough, you can talk, Jake. I'll go pour myself more coffee. Would you?

Jake Edwards (01:48:30):

See, where are we now? Earlier today we heard putting the pen to the paper, you said. So when you talk about the institutions that are teaching, they're reading somebody else's pen to the paper and what was on their mind. And so you got to remember, they have to jot down what their superiors are expecting them to write and reasoning what they're doing is correct. So their literature that all these scholars are learning today, like the Jesuit missions, you follow that back to the doctrine of discovery and somewhere's in there. There's some honest writers that told how it is and what they saw. Those ones are mostly unpublished, just like the Sullivan Clinton campaign in 1779, the journals of the soldiers, the militia, only a certain few were chosen to be published. And that's the ones that degrade us as a people. And so the ones that weren't were usually burned. And in our oral teachings, those nice guys that were in there, they didn't want to be in that militia.

(01:50:11):

Now my gram, she was born in 1880s and remember her very well. Of course the [inaudible 01:50:22] remembers Gram Edith and she told what her grandmother told and exactly the spot that we hid. So if you can imagine what's coming up in the next couple weeks is this 4th of July celebration and you're sitting anywhere in the country, you're going to hear boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, as soon as it gets dark, dusk. That's what we heard when we ran to hide. We heard the guns coming, we heard the cannons coming and we fled to our hiding spots in our house. In our own house, as we watched our villages get burned out and our crops. They had a mission, scorched earth campaign. And some of the stories that weren't published that were told were of women holding their babies and being stripped from their arms and whipped against the tree by their baby's ankles and thrown at the mother's feet to say, "This is what you're going to live with if you stay. So our advice to you is to leave."

(01:51:55):

And a lot of our people left. The other part about it was that Bible, to accept that Bible so that these people will accept you otherwise you're going to be living in pain like that baby. When you talk about the iron fist, you hear about the iron fist. These stories go untold because our people are in pain to hear it again. And we can't share that with the non-natives because we'll get more of that pain from them. And so when you hear that term, the truth hurts. It certainly does. It certainly does. And so when you talk about staying in your own lane, you mentioned that, we talked about that in 1613.

Sandy Bigtree (01:53:01):

" Let me remind you."

Jake Edwards (01:53:02):

We got to stay in your own lane treaty with you guys. There's your lane. Stay in it. There's our lane. It represents the canoe and the vessel, the boat. And your religion in your way, your ceremonies, your laws stay in your vessel. Ours will stay in ours. And we agreed to travel the river of life side by each, not to enforce ours unto anyone. And you're not to enforce yours unto us. Violations. There's a lot of violations that occur. There's a lot of violations. Put that one out there. We got treaties afterwards with the colonizers. And there's a lot of misinterpreted writings because you also got to remember that there's a barrier of language understandings.

(01:54:14):
The interpreters were Christians. The interpreters, they were told at the very beginning that the way to get to the indigenous people's lands is through their language. And I was told that linguists was developed here in America in Massachusetts for that very purpose. You got to understand what they talk about in order to take their land. At the same time passing a law that Massachusetts claimed all the way over to the West Coast, that was theirs. I don't know if they ever rescinded that law. That law was passed in a pub.

Sandy Bigtree (01:55:09):
Of course it was.

Jake Edwards (01:55:12):
And so when you look at the destruction, you guys are scholars, academics, and you understand his story. I had a hard time in school myself when Orrin mentioned that he went to seventh grade, I got him. I went to eighth grade. I got him by a year. And I didn't get along with my teachers either, especially in social studies because I'd go home to do my homework so they didn't hold me back again. And I'd ask my uncle and my mom, "Why are you guys teaching us this, and they're teaching us this and they're not the same?" And uncle said if... Well, my mom, first, she said, "Break that word in half. That's his story. That's not necessarily how it happened, but that's his story. And if you want to pass in his class, then you got to understand his story. But if you want to survive as Onondaga, then you better listen to his."
(01:56:35):
And she pointed at her brother, my uncle. So I closed that book and I started talking to uncle and I was a little bit different than other people my age, my friends, my brothers. Yeah, eight brothers and three sisters and three that were taken in, adopted or... It wasn't an adoption, but they always slept with us and ate with us, the chores with us. So I guess you can call it an adoption. One of them was a white guy, Billy Donathan. You remember him?

Jordan Brady Loewen-Colón (01:57:23):
Yeah.

Jake Edwards (01:57:24):
Billy, my mom took him in. He was orphaned and he lived up on Onondaga Hill. And there's a dirt road that used to go to Onondaga Hill that I lived on. And my father friended him. And so he stayed with us. He was my older brother's age. He stayed, hung out with us until dark and we'd walk him back up the hill, about three mile walk. And one day this taxi driver that used to be down in the nation, Paul Beckman, it was dark. So they hired him, take that boy home. And he got home and when he was there, the was the house was empty and there was a box with his stuff in it and a note that said, "You like the Indians so much, go live with them."
(01:58:29):
So he did. He lived with us till he died. He went on his own once he became an adult. But we took him in and under those teachings are is he must have followed the white roots of peace to get to us. And the white roots of peace is in the great law. When the great Tree of Peace was planted that you heard Orrin mention that the tree was uprooted and all the weapons of war were buried and to be washed off by the waters under the ground so that our next generations don't see these weapons of war. They're not just knives and tomahawks and bows and arrows. Weapons of war is dark thinking, sharp words. That's what starts wars, right?

(01:59:25):

A gun don't start a war. It's those dark emotions that trigger you to get somebody else mad or upset. And so those are all buried too. And on top of it, the root, the tree is placed back over that uprooted hole where all the weapons of war are buried and the white roots are expanding in all directions. Anybody can follow them roots to seek shelter under the laws of great law of peace. And so that's what my elders thought this little white boy was doing because we heard that before. Anybody that was sometimes called captive settlers, children's are kidnapped in the woods and raised as Indians. Hardly any of them wanted to go back. They never wanted to go back to their own people. They wanted to stay. The Louisiana purchase is a big example of that. The French did the same thing. French was in control of that, right?

(02:00:42):

According to their laws, their man-made-up laws. And when it came time for the French to fight for that, their own people said, "No, we're not. But these are good people and they created their own culture down there." And since they didn't have no support of the Frenchmen on the lands, then they had to sell it, which wasn't even their right to sell, but they did anyways. And so when you talk about the great law of peace, it connects to every single thing in life. It connects to all things in life. Even war, talks about wars. It talks about sharp words, the sharp words that hurt feelings that cause wars are buried so future generations don't have to see that. And so when the missionaries start coming into our area, this is what we remember, but it was our kids. It was a young, I don't know how many winters old he was, 11 winters maybe, I think. We don't count the years, we count the winters how old are you. Even to ask you how old you are, [inaudible 02:02:03] say, "How many winters have you seen?"

(02:02:09):

And sometimes you tell. Sometimes we might've had no snow that winter, so you're still 39. Everybody's 39. There was a pause and this guy was in that mission, St. Marie Lemoines, wherever it was, not far from here, it was just up less than a thousand yards away. And he heard something his foot. And he went and told his people, that floor sounds different under that carpet or that rug they had. Sleeping pad or a sleeping rug they had. And so he was instructed to go find out what made it sound different, because they were skeptical of these missionaries because the first thing they said was they got paper to your land, right? They had a document saying, "This is all ours now, but we'll work with you." Telling us that. Well anyways, they found weapons under there. Guns and rum. Rum or whiskey one. I don't know.

(02:03:35):

There was a taste of who we did trade with by either it was with the French for the rum or the English for the whiskey because the taste. So it became a war between them on supplying us the drink we preferred after we got a taste of it. This is what we heard from our oral teachings. And we're told that either one of them are no good and it burns your guts and they must have meant your liver because it causes cirrhosis. So our people knew that way back then that they call it fire water. It burns your insides out. And so anyways, as far as the missionaries go and what you were talking about and how to teach that, you can't really instruct someone to say, "Read this book, this book, this book, all those books," and you become a teacher yourself. You have to teach by example. And in the case of the Christians, it would be returning the land without question to who it belongs to. Then you'll get your answers to a better environment. Return the land immediately without question.

(02:05:19):

No, "You have to become a priest in order to accept this land," or any of that kind of stuff. Because that's what they're saying. The higher ups got more land and got more control of it. Return it all back over, right to the people. Right to the people of the land, starting right here.

Pull the strings, right, paper. What do you call that? Pen to the paper to initiate the United States laws to automatically turn over, land back to the indigenous peoples because it was the Christians who helped formate the laws even to this day to do just the damage that we're talking about. And so if you want to start healing, you start with where it started. It's taking the land. So give it back, make the laws happen to give it back, get the money available to pass the laws, to get it back. Then you're going to see some healing start taking effect just like on the Klamath River and what the salmon are doing and what the bears are doing and the berries and all that, everything we just talked about, right?

(02:06:34):

Environmental justice is coming to show its face by returning that. So when you look at the body of water and you feel the presence of the water, just for a moment, feel that. You're surrounded in sacred water. You don't know the outside world yet. You haven't even taken a breath yet, but you can feel the water. And the water breaks and you take your breath. And in it's itself is a sacred time, sacredness of it. And so when you talk about the sacredness of water and then you talk about constructing a dam, that's like taking the indigenous people out of their house and putting them on a reservation and the water in a lake or reservoir. You're damming up, you're stopping natural flow, you're stopping it.

(02:07:47):

You're not killing it. We're still here. The waters are still going over that dam. They're trying to have control of all natural life, including indigenous people. So if you want to do the right thing and put your pen to the paper and make a lot of, give this land right back to the indigenous people all across the country and start the healing process right there for the environment, and then keep all your religions and all your fancy dancing and all your whiskey and rum in your boat. And sail away. There's more to the story.

Sandy Bigtree (02:08:42):

That was great.

Chip Callihan (02:08:42):

That's good place to end, I think.

Sandy Bigtree (02:08:42):

Yeah, I think so. Perfect wrap-up.

Jordan Brady Loewen-Colón (02:08:42):

The producers of this podcast were Adam DJ Brett and Jordan Laude Cologne. Our intro and outro is Social dancing music by Oris Everett and Regis Cook. This podcast is funded in collaboration with the Henry Luce Foundation, Syracuse University and Hendrix Chapel, and the Indigenous Values Initiative. If you like this episode, please check out our website and make sure to subscribe.